

Biscovey Nursery and Infant Community School

Lamellyn Road, Par, PL24 2DB

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school has improved since the last inspection because senior leaders have successfully improved the quality of teaching.
- Across the school all groups of pupils make good progress.
- Attainment in reading and mathematics is now above the national average. Attainment in writing is improving rapidly.
- Additional adults give very good extra support to children who need it.
- The curriculum is carefully focused on pupils' needs, and provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- Behaviour is good across the school. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They feel safe in school and know who to turn to if they have a problem. Bullying is rare.
- The school's very good professional development for all staff is a fundamental reason for raising standards of teaching and learning.
- The governing body is a challenging and supportive friend to the school. Governors are well informed, know their responsibilities well, and successfully fulfil their role in holding senior leaders to account for the school's performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a small number of lessons pupils are not sufficiently challenged to ensure that they make rapid progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is not outstanding because when they become disinterested in lessons they sometimes lose focus on their work and misbehave.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 19 lessons. Five lessons were observed jointly with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also made short visits to sessions where small groups of children, or individuals, are given extra support with their learning.
- The inspectors heard pupils read, examined pupils' work in their books, and observed pupils' activities in the playground and in the dinner hall.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, members of the governing body, support staff and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including minutes of governors' meetings, a summary of the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, the school's information on pupils' progress, and records relating to pupils' safety, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke informally to parents to seek their views about the school. The number of responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) was too few to be taken into account; however, the school had recently undertaken its own questionnaire for parents and the inspection team considered the results from this survey.
- The views expressed by 19 staff who returned a questionnaire were also considered.

Inspection team

Chris Chamberlain, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Jones

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Biscovey Nursery and Infant Community School is an average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care, and children of service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs is lower than in most other schools.
- The school makes use of a local authority nurture unit for one of its pupils. There is no other alternative provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding by making sure that all teachers:
 - accelerate the rate at which pupils learn by always providing an effective level of challenge to meet the wide range of pupils' needs
 - ensure that pupils are fully engaged in their learning by providing activities that stimulate pupils' focus and concentration
 - make sure that learning activities are more closely matched to pupils' interests and levels of development.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Due to improvements in teaching, pupils are making good progress in their learning at all stages throughout the school. A very large majority of parents agree that their children are making better progress. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is now above the national average in both reading and mathematics, and although attainment in writing is in line with national averages it is improving.
- Pupils join the Nursery with skills and aptitudes that are broadly in line with the levels that would normally be expected for their age, although their literary skills are often below age-related expectations. Due to good teaching they make good progress, and leave the Nursery with literacy skills that are in line with average expectations.
- Daily phonics sessions, where pupils are grouped by ability, have been important in accelerating pupils' progress.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to provide extra help on a one-to-one basis for individual pupils or in small groups with well-trained teaching assistants. The average point scores (APS) for pupils entitled to free school meals show that their attainment in both English and mathematics is lower than that of other pupils at the school, but because of the additional support to improve their attainment, the gap between these groups of pupils and their peers is narrowing.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress at similar rates to their classmates, the result of effective one-to-one sessions and well-targeted support in class.
- Pupils make rapid progress in reading because of the good teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters and words make) and the additional, more focused support given to pupils who find reading difficult. Pupils confidently use their knowledge of phonics to read words they do not know. The strong link between home and school begins in Nursery, where parents are encouraged to stay in the classroom for the first part of the day to support their child's learning. This continues throughout the school, where pupils benefit from being supported by their parents who regularly read with their children at home.
- The school's improved, topic-based curriculum gives pupils exciting opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge to a wide range of subjects such as designing fabrics during a project focusing on China or celebrating traditions during a focus on the history of Cornwall.

The quality of teaching is good

- Since the last inspection senior leaders have provided an intensive programme of support and training to improve the quality of teaching. Most teaching, including that of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, is now good and some is outstanding. All parents spoken to during the inspection and those who completed the school's own questionnaire agreed that teaching is good.
- Teachers usually have high expectations. By asking probing questions, they develop the pupils' learning, building on the answers they give to questions and drawing out their understanding of the topic under discussion. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher organised different tasks for pupils depending on their level of understanding. Using a range of measuring equipment and a variety of different tasks, the teacher organised interesting activities well matched to the pupils' needs. For example, a group working outside independently chose their own equipment and worked out their own methods to measure the gaps between randomly placed plastic counters. The adult supporting the group used effective questioning to develop pupil's skills and extend their knowledge.
- Learning environments are well resourced. They support pupils' development through the use of computer activities to reinforce learning in numeracy, and display words that help pupils to progress in their reading and writing.

- Teachers help pupils learn through providing a range of exciting projects and focused weeks including looking at a range of religious festivals. This has included projects on 'Light and Dark', exploring music, and looking at the different ways people live during a week learning all about Africa. In this way teaching also promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage a wide range of opportunities helps children to learn through play and investigation, both inside and outside the classroom. Children engage in activities designed to improve their coordination, such as in working with their friends to construct a balancing trail around the outdoor area. Through skilful questioning and encouragement from a teaching assistant supporting learning outside, pupils discovered that colours change when mixed.
- Adults establish positive relationships with pupils. Teachers methodically track pupils' progress and carefully plan for each individual pupil's next step in their learning, ensuring that no pupil is disadvantaged.
- The school's methodical approach to marking ensures that pupils understand how they can improve. Marking is detailed and supports the planning of the pupils' next learning activity. For example when marking pupils' writing, teachers use detailed success-criteria grids to enable them to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. In the most effective lessons pupils are encouraged to read the teacher's comments and apply the feedback to their next piece of work. Teachers check on pupils' learning during lessons and readily adapt tasks to pupils' needs.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because in a small number of lessons there is not enough challenge for all pupils and therefore progress is not always rapid enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school positively emphasises the importance of high standards of behaviour. As a result pupils are well behaved and keen to learn. They are polite and well mannered during lessons as well as in other school activities. Parents, pupils and staff all agree that behaviour is typically good.
- Pupils' movements around the school are orderly because they take full responsibility for their own behaviour as well as encouraging each other to behave well.
- The school has improved play at break times by giving pupils more activities that interest them. This has ensured that pupils are happy and busy. For example, in the Year 1 playground, staff give pupils a wide range of activities, such as acting as chefs in the role-play area, and encourage them to use books to identify birds. Model construction equipment is used well to encourage pupils to learn through play, and adults lead sessions and games such as 'Wake and Shake' to encourage pupils' fitness and develop cooperative play skills.
- Pupils feel safe in school, understand the importance of e-safety and are confident that any instances of poor behaviour, including bullying, will be dealt with appropriately by adults in school. They are aware of the different forms in which bullying can take place.
- Although attendance is lower than the national average, the school is working hard with families to reduce absence, and has appropriate systems in place, such as through telephone calls to families, to follow-up absences.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because, on a small number of occasions, when pupils are not challenged fully by their activities and become disinterested, they tend to lose focus on their work and sometimes misbehave.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders have successfully improved teaching, which is now good. Pupils know what they have to do to enhance their work, and their writing skills have improved.
- There is a strong ethos of continuous school improvement that is shared by all staff.

- Good leadership has led to more detailed teaching plans which are focused clearly on pupils' next steps in their learning. Pupils understand how to improve their work and are keen to make progress.
- The curriculum is well designed to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural and social development of all pupils. It is broad, balanced and designed to promote equal opportunity for all pupils; senior leaders work hard to ensure there is no discrimination. Weekly assemblies strengthen pupils' knowledge about the wider world by sharing music, artwork and stories from countries such as Australia and India.
- The school has improved its tracking of pupils' progress since the last inspection. Combined with regular work scrutiny and moderation of pupils' work, this gives senior leaders an accurate picture of pupils' progress. Discussions are regularly held with teachers to agree the best teaching strategies for pupils who are making slower progress and who need additional support. For example, pupils who are not making rapid enough progress are given support with their learning in small groups or work on a one-to-one basis with an experienced teaching assistant.
- Teaching is very well monitored by senior leaders. Performance management is robust and is clearly linked to improving the quality of teaching, accelerating pupils' progress in writing, and reviewing and continuing to improve the curriculum. Training, linked to the school improvement plan and performance management objectives, is regularly provided for all staff.
- Senior and middle leaders produce effective development plans with clear success criteria. Regular monitoring focuses the whole school on a cycle of continuous self-improvement.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils fully meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority has given support to this good school, including helping to improve the quality of teaching and accelerating progress in writing.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are aware of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and understand how the school's performance compares to that of other schools nationally. They have been fully involved in the improvements that the school has made since the last inspection, and have spent time in school, working with pupils and undertaking learning walks. They have talked to adults so that they understand fully how the school works, and how successfully initiatives have led to school improvement. Governors undertake their own professional development to help them hold the school to account, and set challenging performance management objectives for the headteacher based on pupil tracking data. They have an overview of standards of teaching, know how performance management is used to improve the quality of teaching and monitor salary progression for other staff. They understand how pupil premium funding is being used and the impact of this on pupils' progress.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	111903
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	405361

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fiona Edgington
Headteacher	Richard Hope-Pears
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 February 2011
Telephone number	01726 812006
Fax number	01726 813436
Email address	head@biscovey-inf.cornwall.gov.sch

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

